

FIRST
COMICS
DELUXE SERIES

APR. \$1.75
NO. 22
\$2.45 CANADA

BADGER™



W. REINHOLD '86
LML

WHO ARE THESE GUYS, ANYWAY?



The Badger is **Norbert Sykes**, a Vietnam veteran suffering from an extremely rare multiple personality disorder, which has its origins in childhood trauma. Seven great personalities in one. The personality most frequently inhabited by Norbert, indeed almost *exclusively preferred*, is the Badger, a self-styled crime fighter who rides the highways and by-ways of America, meting out bloody justice to jaywalkers, ticket scalpers, indifferent teenaged fast food clerks, in fact, *any damn body he feels like because he's CRAZY!*

Badger is an expert at hand-to-hand combat. He began his training in Shorin-ryu but has since gone on to master dozens of obscure, esoteric, arcane, not to mention obstruse martial arts, the likes of which you seldom hear about.

He can also talk to the animals -- just like Dr. Doolittle, or Lorne Greene. Only Badger gets better results than Lorne Greene.

Badger lives with **Ham the Weather Wizard** in a castle south of Barneveld, Wisconsin. Ham and Badger met while both were inmates at a state mental hospital. He hired Badger as his bodyguard, and Badger's therapist, **Daisy Fields**, became Ham's personal secretary. Through cunning and chicanery, Ham has amassed a considerable fortune.

LAST ISSUE: Badger battled the "Phantom of Bascom Hill," another victim of the Vietnam era, and almost as crazy as the Badger. But as usual, that has virtually nothing to do with this month's story. But all of these whacky vignettes are somehow cleverly interrelated. Trust me.

Rick Obadiah, Publisher
Kathy Kotsivas, Operations Dir.
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A FIRST COMICS PUBLISHING PRODUCTION

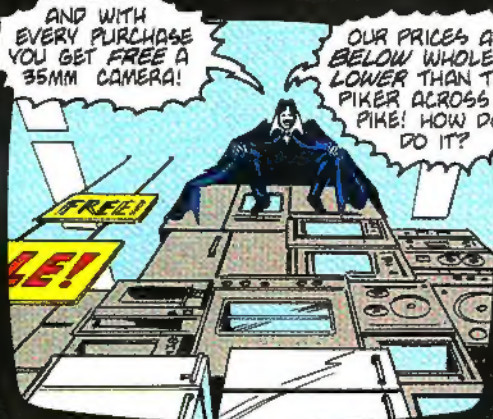
FIRST
COMICS



I'M SITTING ON TOP OF A MOUNTAIN OF VCRs, COLOR TVs, MICROWAVES, STEREOS, ELECTRIC RANGES, GAS RANGES, BOOM BOXES, YOU NAME IT!

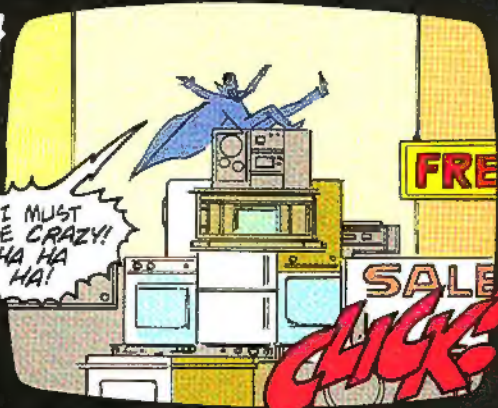


THAT'S RIGHT! IT'S TV LOONY'S ANNUAL CHRISTMAS SALE! WE'RE PRACTICALLY GIVING AWAY BRAND NAME APPLIANCES!

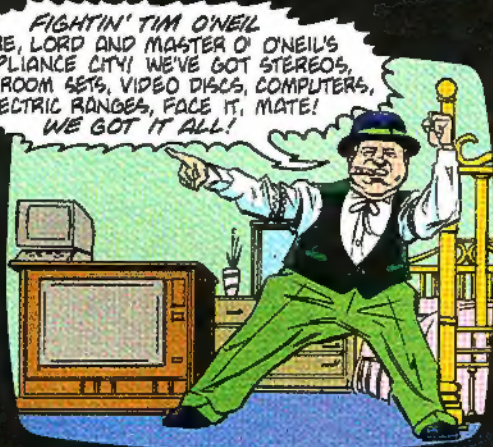


AND WITH EVERY PURCHASE YOU GET FREE A 35MM CAMERA!

OUR PRICES ARE BELOW WHOLESALE! LOWER THAN THAT PIKER ACROSS THE PIKE! HOW DO I DO IT?



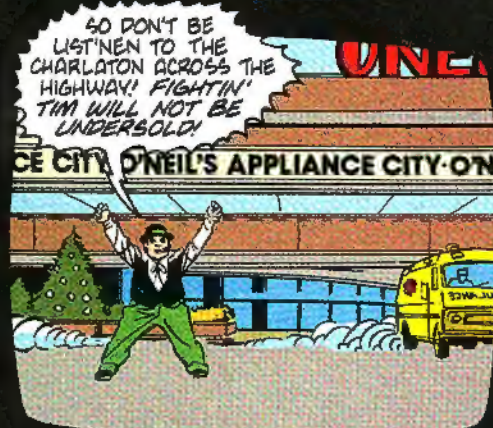
I MUST BE CRAZY! HA HA HA!



FIGHTIN' TIM O'NEIL HERE, LORD AND MASTER O' O'NEIL'S APPLIANCE CITY! WE'VE GOT STEREOS, BEDROOM SETS, VIDEO DISCS, COMPUTERS, ELECTRIC RANGES, FACE IT, MATE! WE GOT IT ALL!



BRAND NAMES AN' PLENTY OF 'EM! AN' WITH EVERY ONE O' OUR CHRISTMAS SPECIALS YOU GET A FREE SET OF CHOICE CHICAGO CUTLERY BUTCHER KNIVES! AYE!



SO DON'T BE LIST'NEN TO THE CHARLATON ACROSS THE HIGHWAY! FIGHTIN' TIM WILL NOT BE UNDERSOLD!



HOW KIN I OFFER THESE INSANE PRICES? IT'S SIMPLE! I'M OUTTA ME BLEEDIN' MIND!

BADGER Range War



YOW! I AM SO CONFUSED! ONE IS CRAZIER THAN THE OTHER! BOTH ARE COURTING BADGER'S ENDORSEMENT! WHOM SHALL I REPRESENT? IF ANY?!!



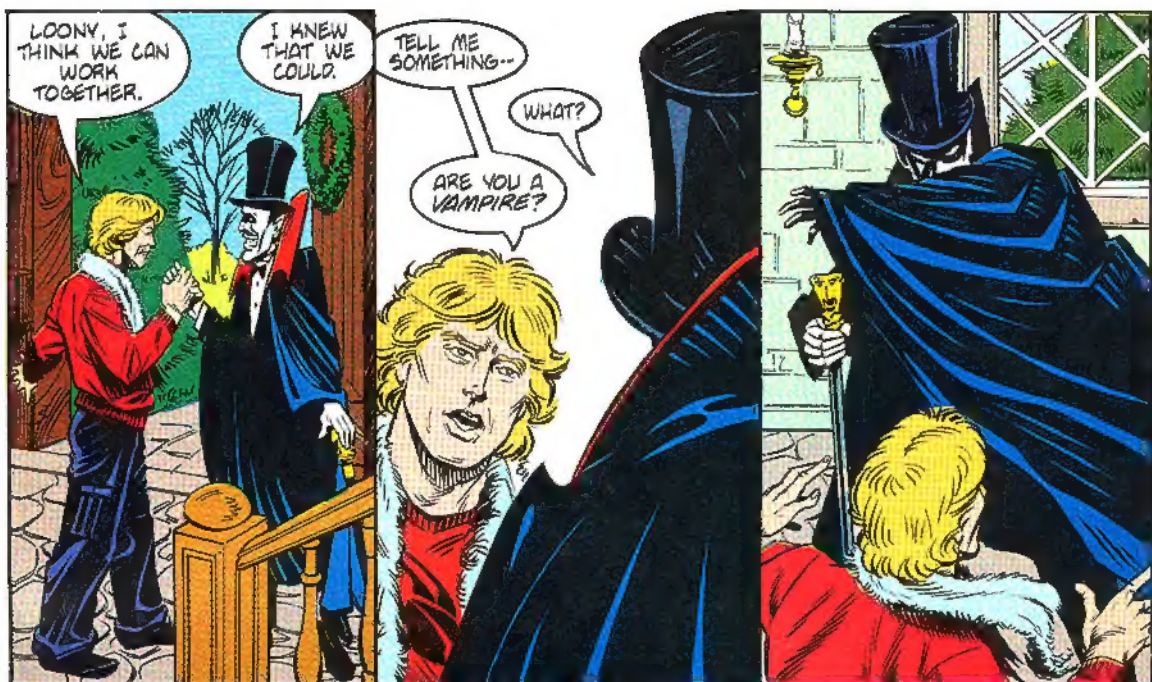
ME! YOU SHALL WORK FOR ME, MY FRIEND-- BECAUSE I SHALL ENDOW A HOME FOR WAYWARD BATS, RATS AND CATS.

YOW! WHAT ABOUT DOGS?!!

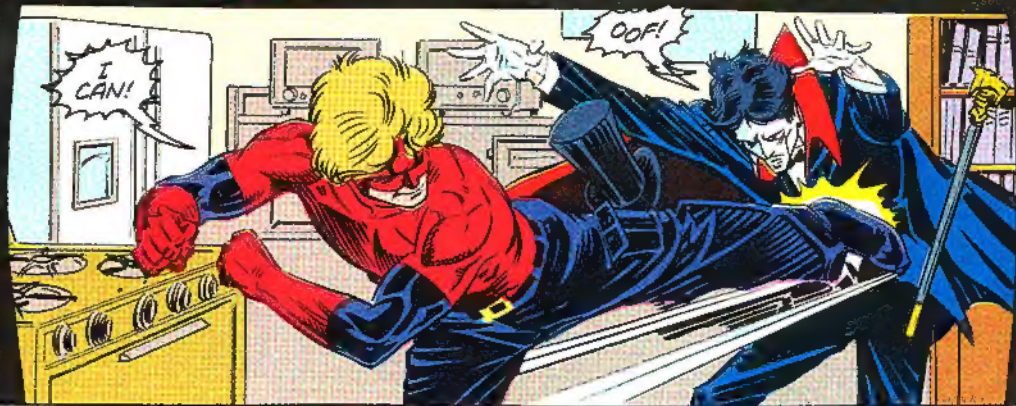


NO DOGS! SOME WOLVES, MAYBE...

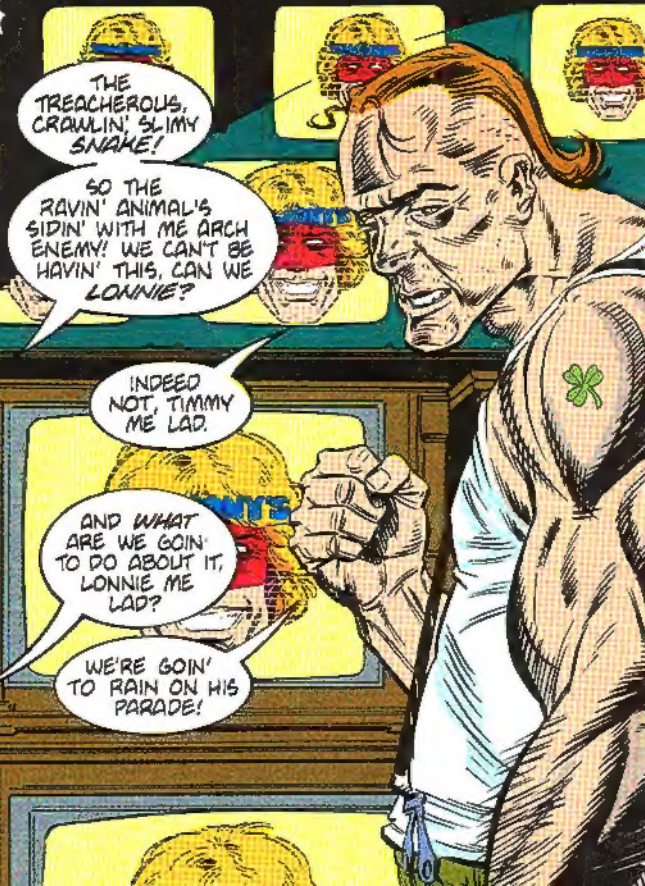
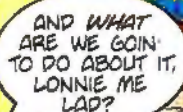
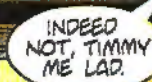
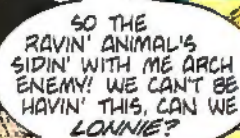
mike baron script	bill reinhold pencils	chuck beckurn inks
willie schubert letters	linda lessmann colors	rick oliver questions



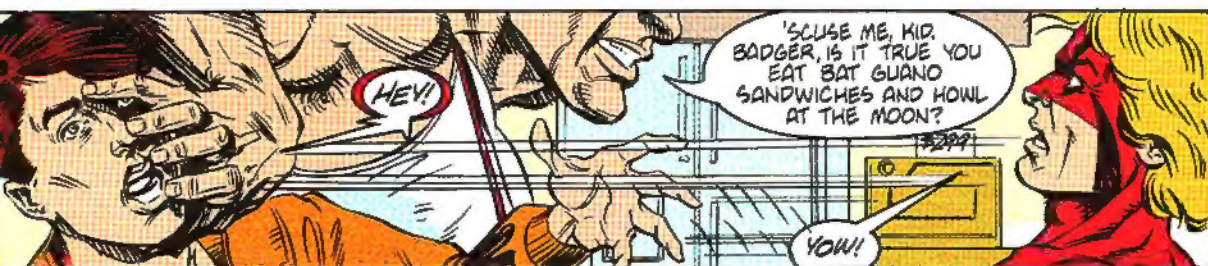
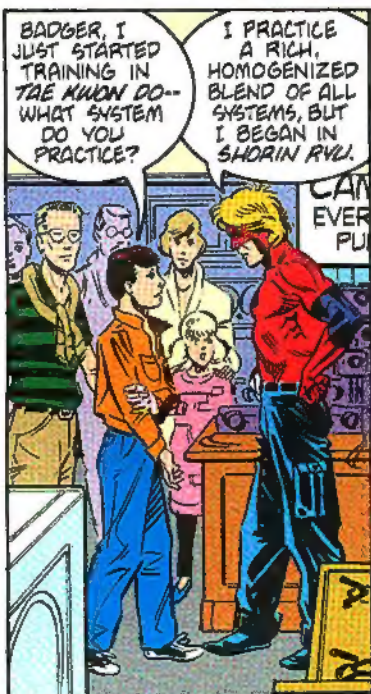
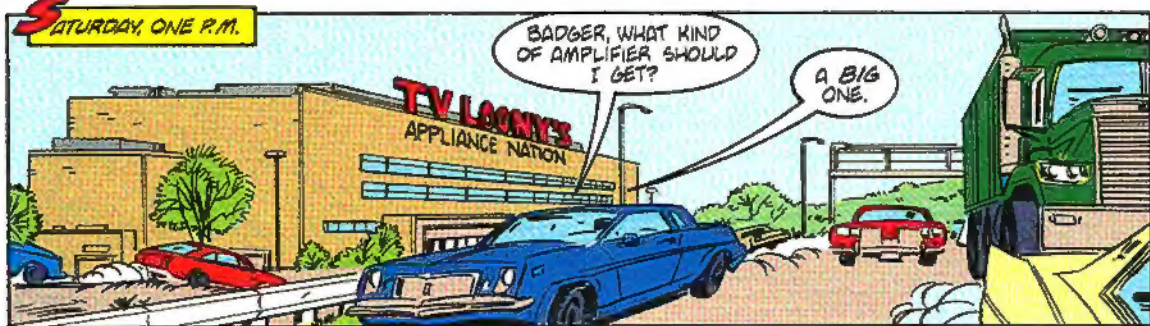
NO! NO! YOU CAN'T!

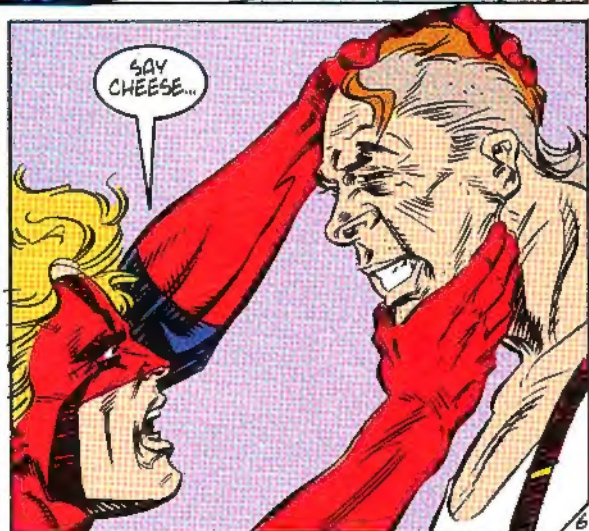
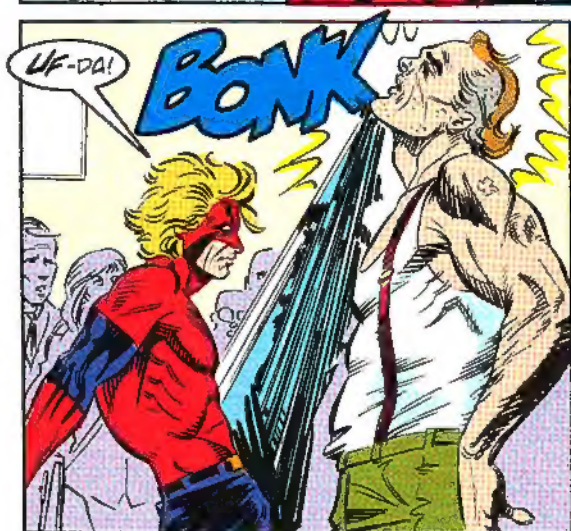
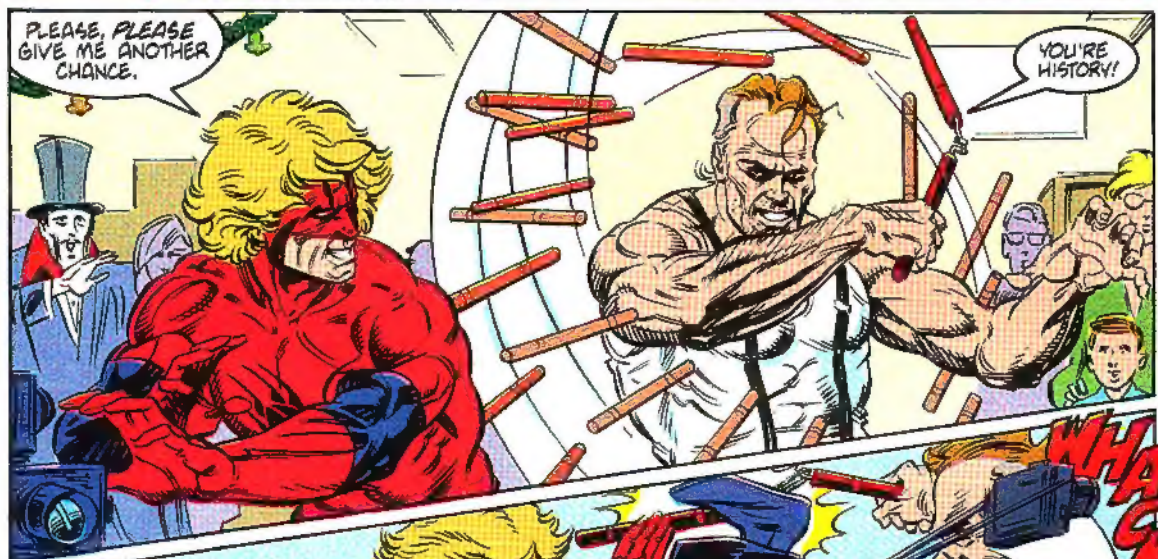


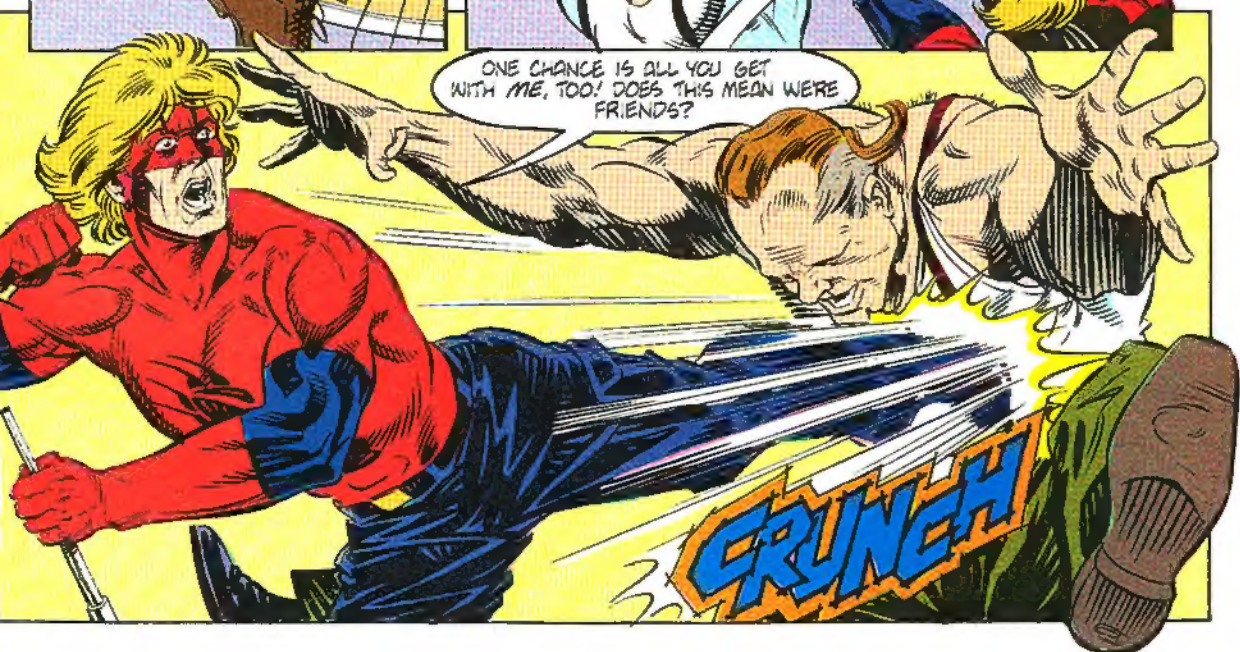
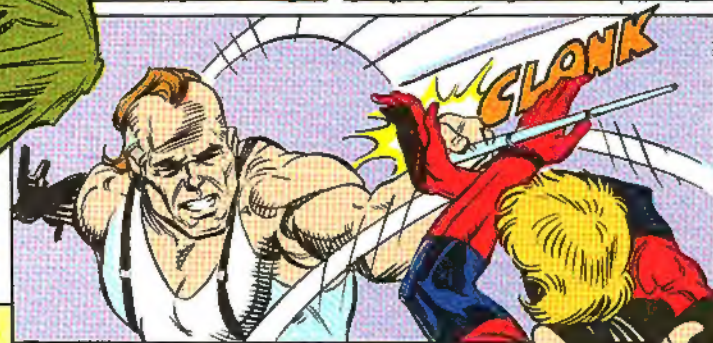
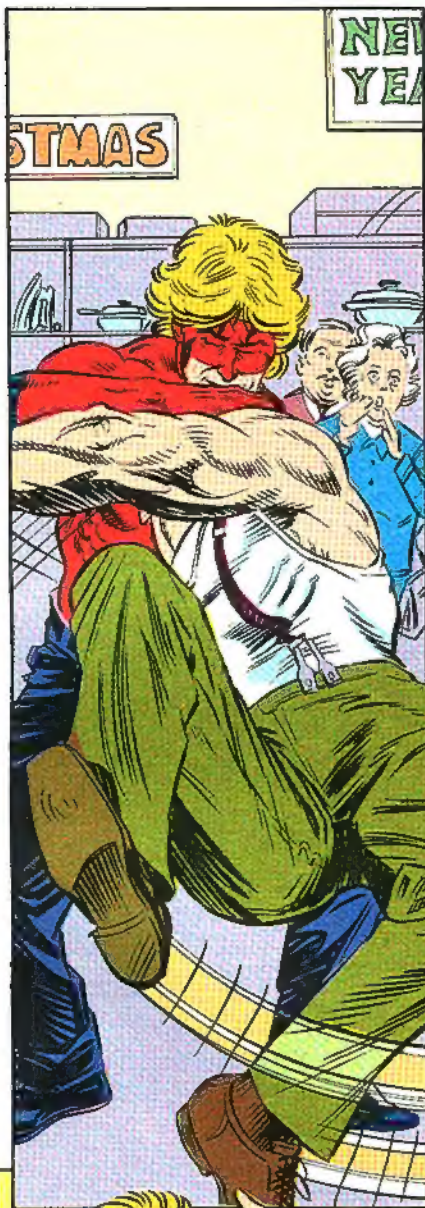
OOF!



SATURDAY, ONE P.M.







...THE BADGER'S
LAWYER CLAIMS THAT
BADGER ACTED IN SELF-
DEFENSE. HE IS FREE
PENDING A HEARING.
HOWEVER, HE WILL NOT
BE APPEARING TOMORROW
AT TV LOONY'S APPLIANCE
NATION...

WE'LL
BE RIGHT
BACK.

NEWS 47 file tape

HI, NATURE LOVERS! BADGER
HERE. YOU ALL KNOW HOW CRAZY
I AM--I'VE TAKEN CONTROL OF
TV LOONY'S ENTIRE
INVENTORY!

I'M
LOWERING PRICES
TO ROCK BOTTOM!
ONE DAY ONLY!
SUNDAY!

SUNDAY
AT APPLIANCE
NATION! SEE ELECTRIC
RANGES! SEE ARNIE "THE
FARMER" BESWICK'S FUEL-
INJECTED FUNNY
CAR! SEE--

CLICK!

THE
BLOODY, BLEEDIN'
BLIGHTER!

OOHH--
DON'T MOVE AROUND
SO MUCH

IT WAS
MY IDEA TO USE
THE BLOODY, BLEEDIN'
'BADGER IN THE
FIRST PLACE!

AW, FORGET
IT! YOU'LL NEVER
CATCH LOONY! HE'S
JUST TOO
BIG!

YOU'RE FORGETTIN'
ME IRISH LUCK, LONNIE
ME LAD!

SMACK
OW!

I'M BRINGING IN A
SPECIALIST, LONNIE,
ME LAD!

VIKES!

FIRST NOTES

Okay, I'll admit it. I'm confused. All right, I'm easily confused. But this one's really got me stumped. Let's see if you can shed a little light on the subject.

There is more comics material on the market today than ever before -- which is good; it's nice to have choices. According to one distributor (the people that get the comics from our printer to your local store), 376 titles are scheduled to come out this month, compared to 199 the same time last year, with much of this growth due to an incredible expansion of the black-and-white market -- which is also good; b&w comics have been treated like the bastard stepchild of color comics for far too long. They deserve some recognition. *Cerebus*, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, and *Fish Police* come to mind. But that's not what puzzles me. What does? Hold on a second.

Oh yeah, that same distributor, Capital City, commented in their newsletter, *Internal Correspondence*, that "Many [comics] products that could not have reached the stands in the past are now being prominently sold as the next 'hot book.' This will inevitably produce a shake-out as consumers realize that there's a lot of comics out there that do not provide a good entertainment experience."

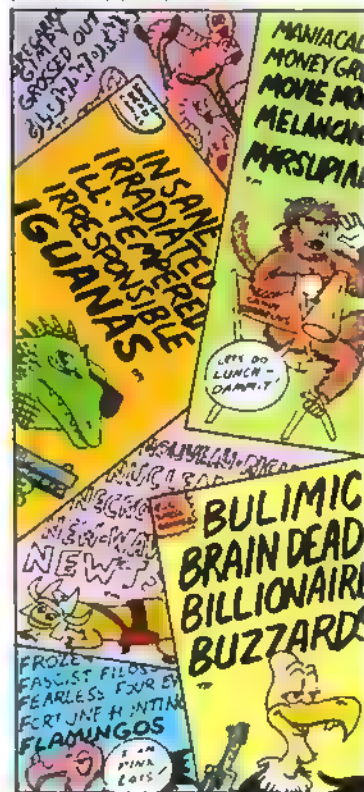
That last bit is the key. "Good entertainment." That's what we strive for in every book we publish. But throwing all professional courtesy out the window (actually, all I had to do was bash its fingers where it clung half-heartedly to the ledge), I have to say that I think a hefty chunk of this "hot" stuff is pure, unadulterated drek. It's not that it's tasteless, or vulgar, or crude. It's just bad. Worse than that, some of it is *intentionally* bad -- the apparent theory being the more inept the art and the more transparent the plagiarism, the better the sales will be.

So what am I confused about? It's coming up right on the other side of this colon: WHO'S BUYING ALL THIS STUFF? AND WHAT DO THEY DO WITH IT? Insulate their ceilings? Train puppies? They can't be reading it. Or looking at the pictures. Can they? Has there been heavy trading in pure drek on the Commodities Exchange recently? Should I contact my broker?

I feel a little foolish asking you to explain this to me. After all, I am supposed to be the expert. But my head hurts too much from thinking about it. I go home at night and have nightmares about hideously deformed rodents badly rendered by autistic quadruplegics, and next week it'll probably be the name of a new hit series from Frog Comics or Geewhiz Productions.

And if I'm not having any fun at

Christmas time, why should you? So I want you to write down your answers and send them to me no later than... well, pretty gosh darn quick. Because if I'm going to cancel our whole line and get all our artists and writers to start cranking out lame imitations of bad parodies before the first of the new year, I've got a lot of serious brain damage to inflict in a very short period of time. You see, I figure if I make them all really stupid -- maybe throw in some motor function damage for the artists -- we can come out with the most pathetically awful books on the market.



And we'll make millions. We'll start with that Steve Rude guy. He won the Kirby Award for best artist this year. He's way too good to be popular! Now where'd I put that balpeen hammer?

-- Rick Oliver

FIRST IN DECEMBER

American Flagg! #39: Reuben Flagg quits the Plexus Rangers and hits the road. But someone else is trying to "hit" Reuben! By J. Marc DeMatteis, Mark Badger and Randy Emberlin. And Bob Violence by Steven Grant and Joe Staton. Cover by Howard Chaykin.

Badger #22: Who would possibly be crazy enough to ask the Badger to be their TV spokesman? Only two crazy appliance store owners, that's who! Stay tuned for "Range Wars," by Mike Baron, Bill Reinhold and Chuck Beckum. And Clonezone by Baron and Mark A. Nelson. Deluxe series.

Dynamo Joe #5: Wolf 1 goes into action against the enemy, while Sigma Base is attacked by an ominous "Enemy Within." By Doug Rice, Phil Foglio, and Brian Thomas. Plus Cargonauts, by Foglio, Paul Guinan, and Sam Grainger.

Elric: Weird of the White Wolf #4: Part two of Michael Moorcock's *The Singing Citadel*. By Roy Thomas, Michael T. Gilbert and George Freeman. Deluxe, bi-monthly series.

Ghostbusters #3: The Ghostbusters investigate "A Haunting Christmas." By Hilarie Staton, Howard Bender, and Rick Burchett. Based on Filmation's new animated cartoon show on the air in over 80% of the U.S. television markets.

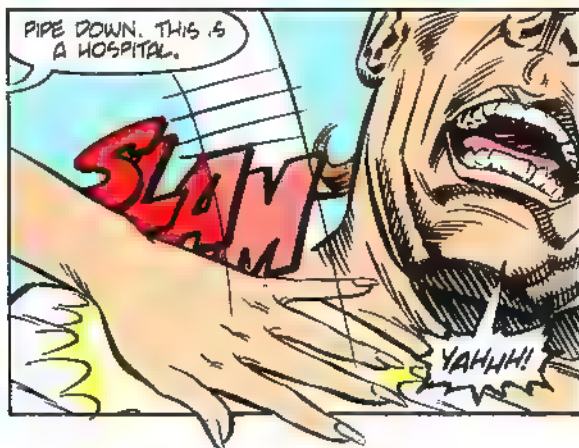
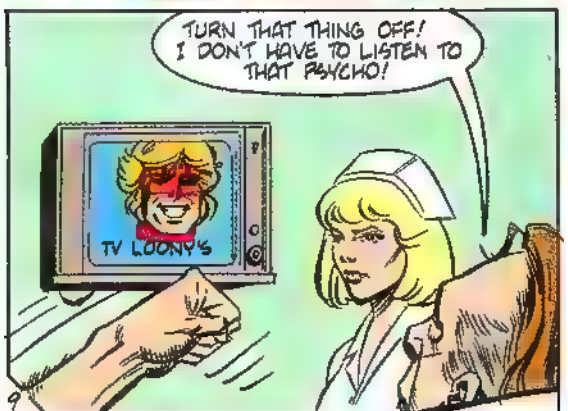
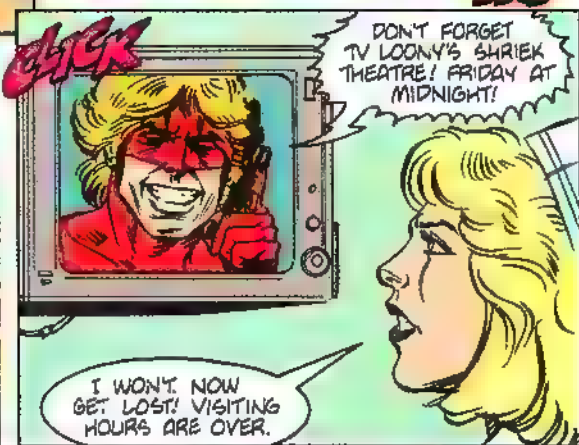
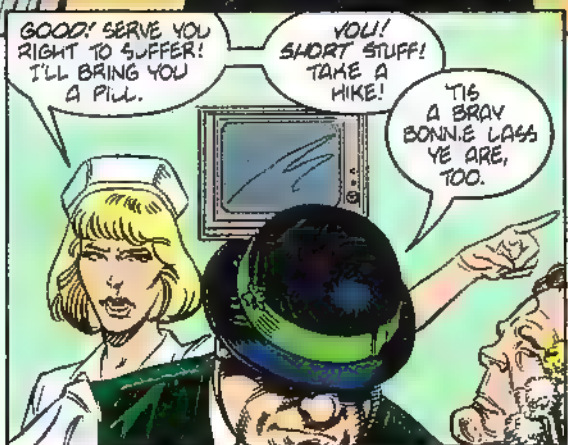
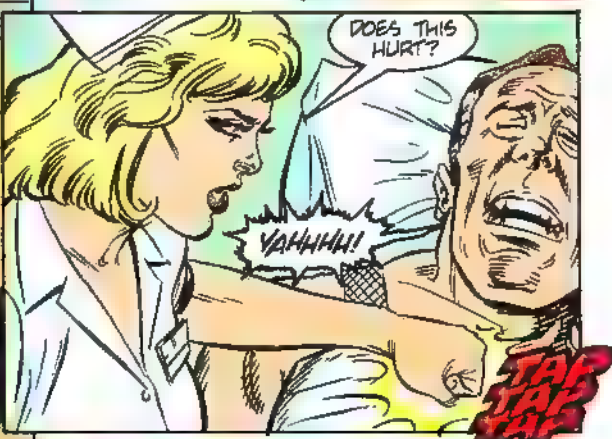
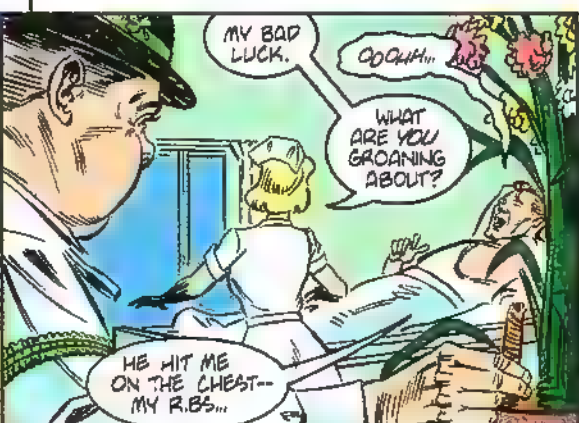
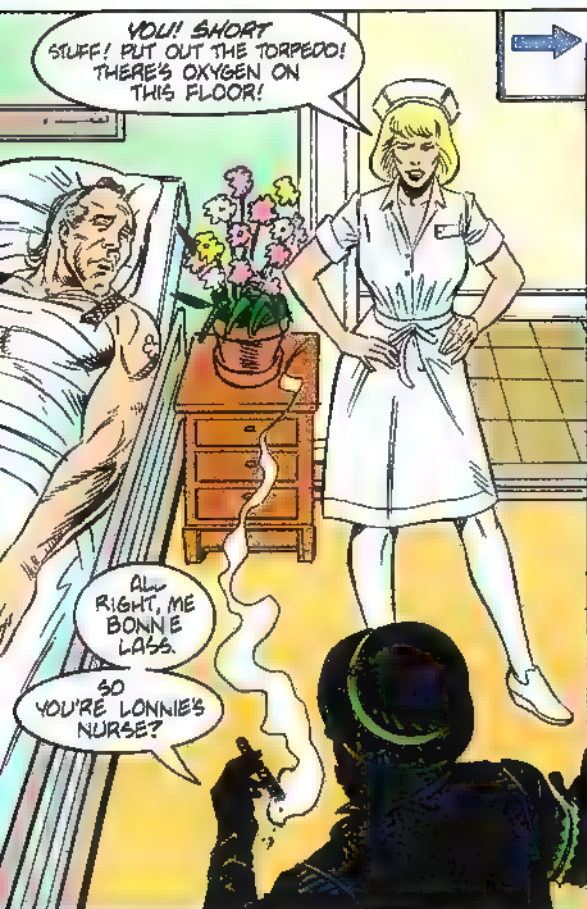
Grimjack #33: Gaunt has vowed to help Spook avenge her death in another dimension. But her uncontrollable lust for vengeance may kill Grimjack, too! By John Ostrander and Tom Mandrake. And a special Munden's Bar Christmas tale by Ostrander, William J. Norris, and Joe Staton.

Jon Sable, Freelance #46: Creator/writer Mike Grell welcomes new JSF artist Mike Manley in a tale of love, betrayal, and murder, when Jon is asked to save a woman's husband caught in a hostage crisis. Part one of "The Tower." Deluxe series.

Nexus #31: Nexus' list leads him to the execution of a mass murderer, which inadvertently sparks a worldwide rebellion in which millions more may die. By Mike Baron and guest artist Gerald Forton. Plus Tales of Judah by Baron and Bill Jaaska. Deluxe series.

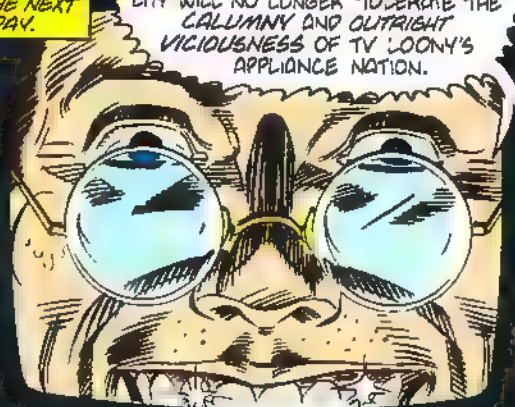
Shatter #8: He's a wanted man everywhere in the free world and the third world. So Shatter heads straight for... the Soviet Union. By Peter B. Gillis, Paul Abrams, and Charlie Athanas. Deluxe, bi-monthly series.

Whisper #6: Whisper exacts her final revenge against Eckart and his insidious computer network, and Alexis Devin is gone forever. So who is that wearing the Whisper costume? By Steven Grant and Norm Breayfogle. Bi-monthly.

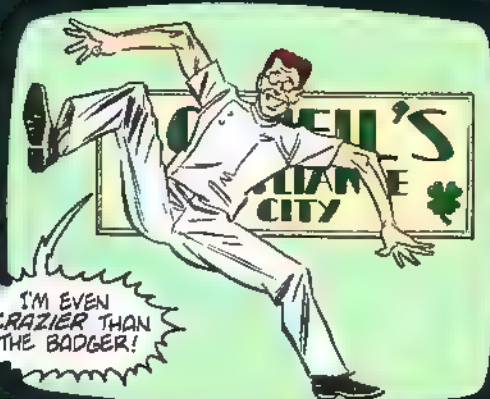
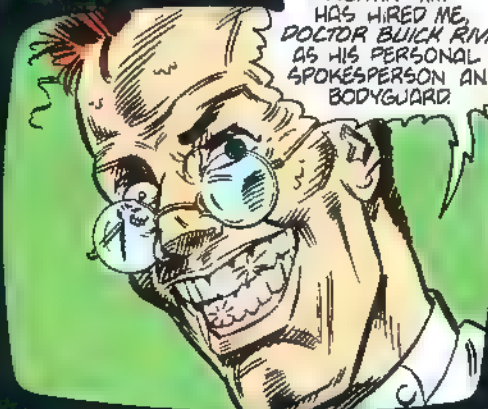


THE NEXT DAY.

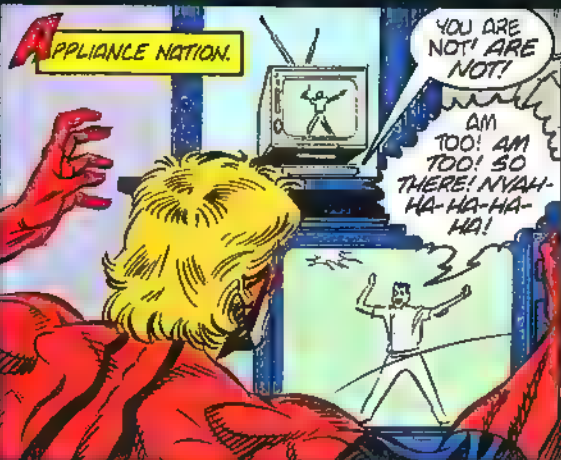
FIGHTIN' TIM O'NEIL'S APPLIANCE CITY WILL NO LONGER TOLERATE THE CALLIN' AND OUTRIGHT VICIOUSNESS OF TV LOONY'S APPLIANCE NATION.



FIGHTIN' TIM HAS HIRED ME, DOCTOR BUICK RIVERA AS HIS PERSONAL SPOKESPERSON AND BODYGUARD.



I'M EVEN CRAZIER THAN THE BADGER!

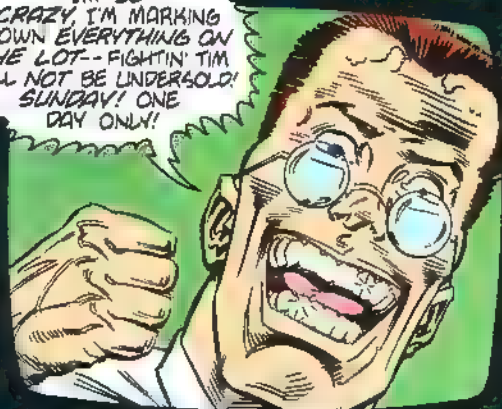


APPLIANCE NATION.

YOU ARE NOT! ARE NOT!

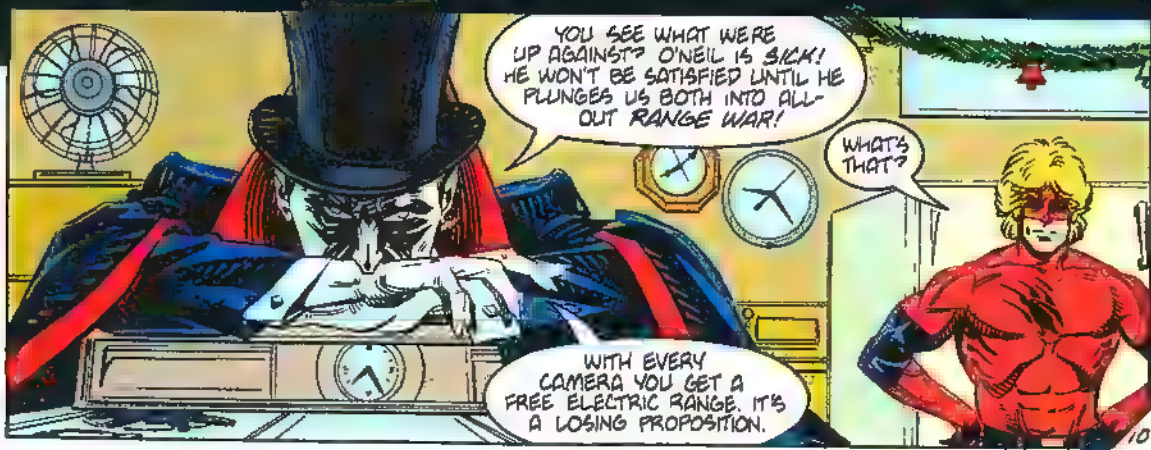
AM TOO! AM TOO! SO THERE! NYAH-HA-HA-HA!

I'M SO CRAZY, I'M MARKING DOWN EVERYTHING ON THE LOT-- FIGHTIN' TIM WILL NOT BE UNDERSOLD! SUNDAY! ONE DAY ONLY!



SUNDAY!

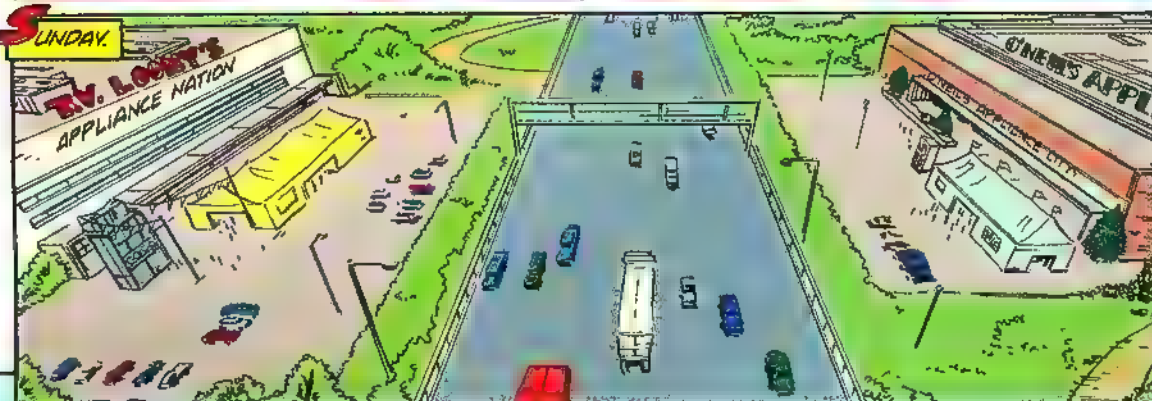
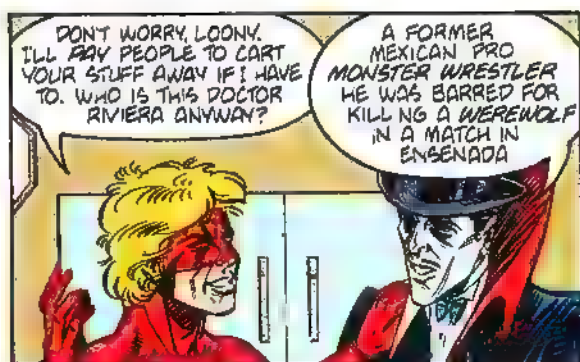
CLICK!

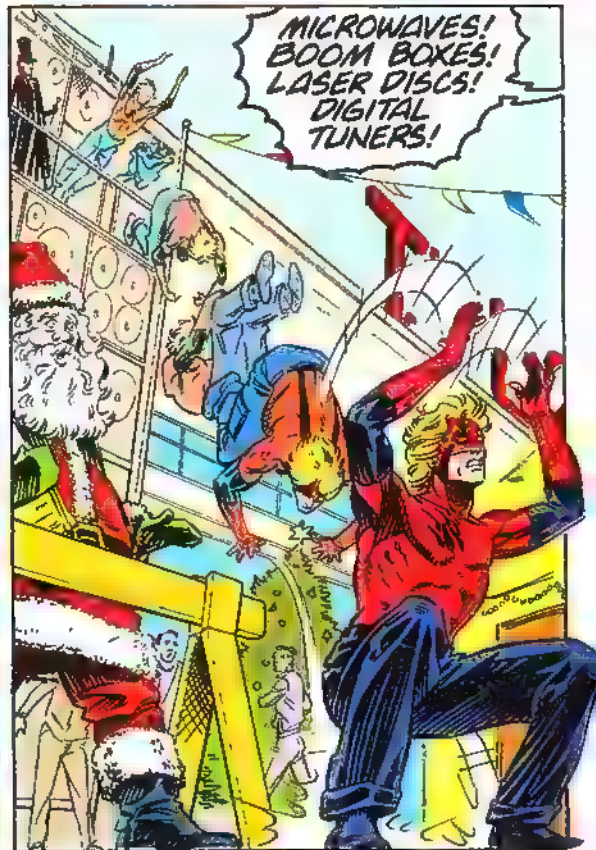
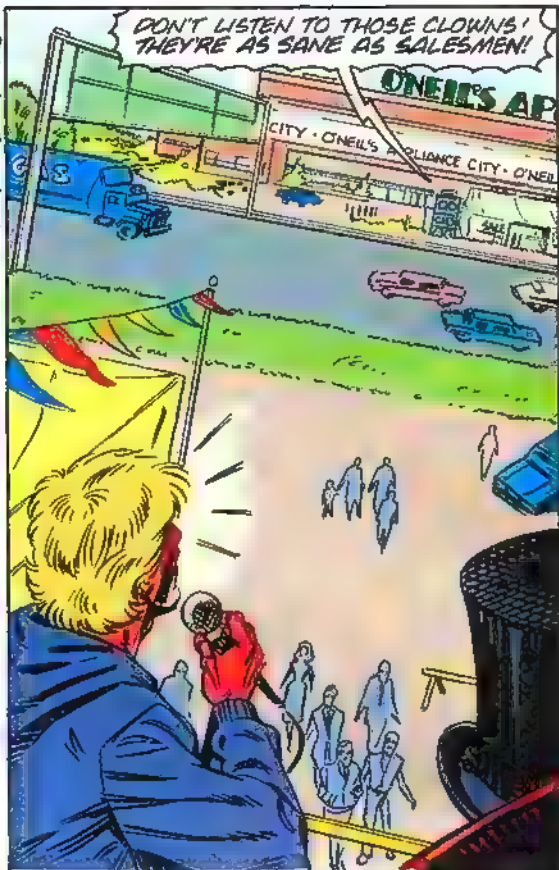
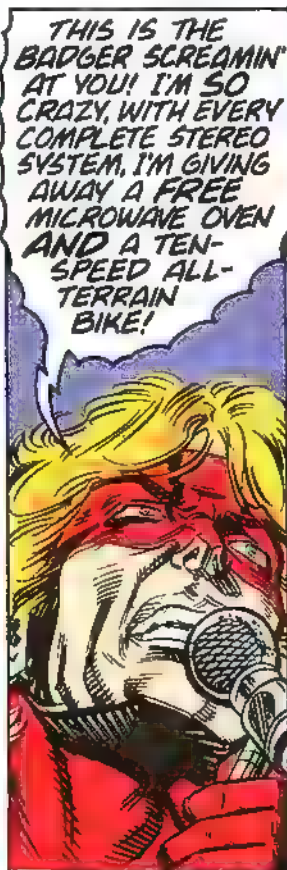


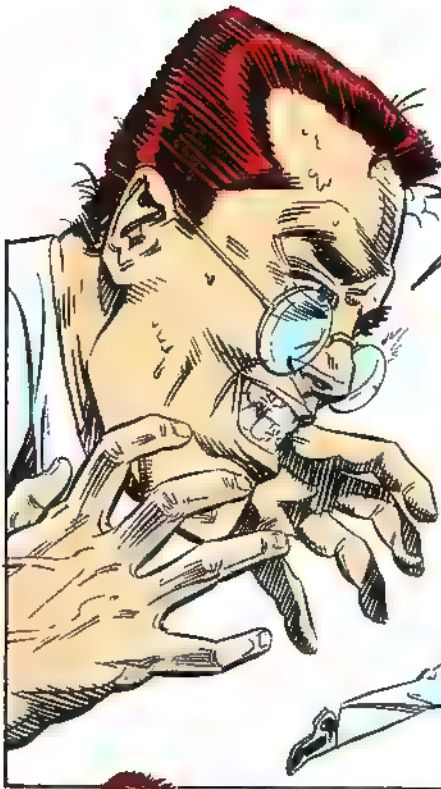
YOU SEE WHAT WE'RE UP AGAINST? O'NEIL IS SICK! HE WON'T BE SATISFIED UNTIL HE PLUNGES US BOTH INTO ALL-OUT RANGE WAR!

WHAT'S THAT?

WITH EVERY CAMERA YOU GET A FREE ELECTRIC RANGE. IT'S A LOSING PROPOSITION.







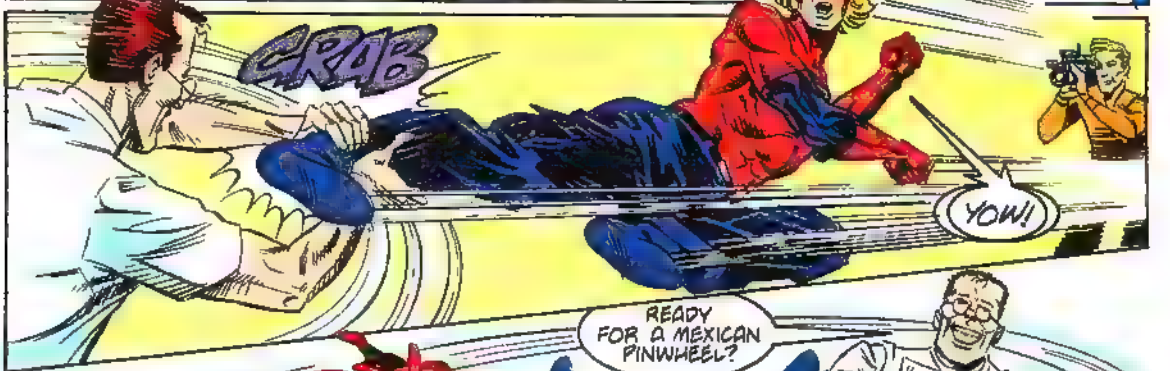
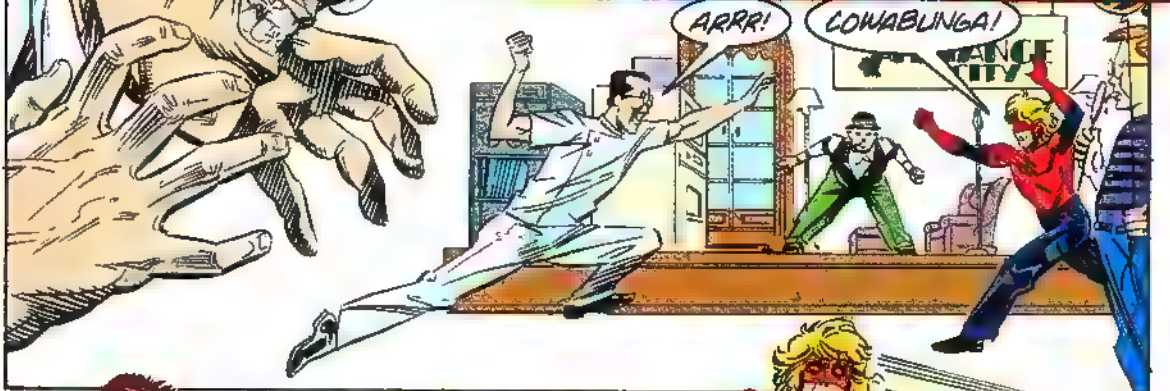
THE DOC
IS GONNA HAVE
TO OPERATE!

COME ON, DOC! I GOT
MAJOR MEDICAL! JUST DON'T TRY
DRAGGING ME TO ONE OF THOSE
MEXICAN CLINICS!



ARRR!

LOWABLINGA!

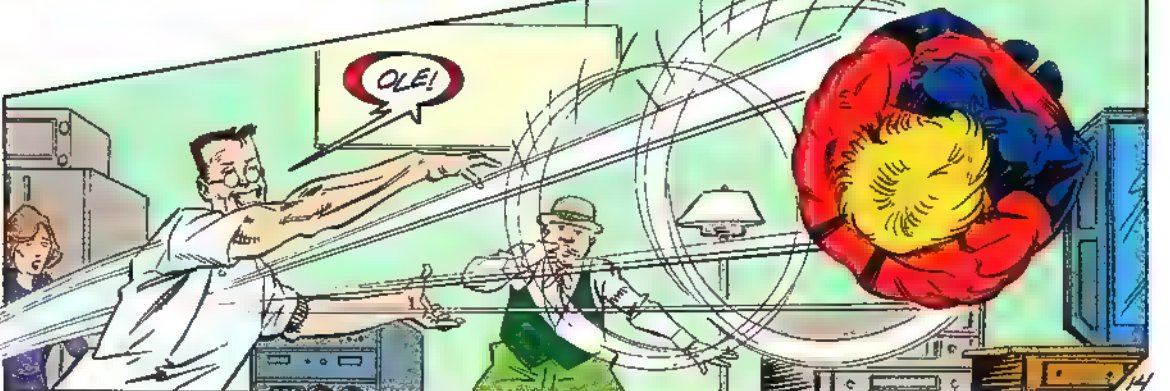


CRAB

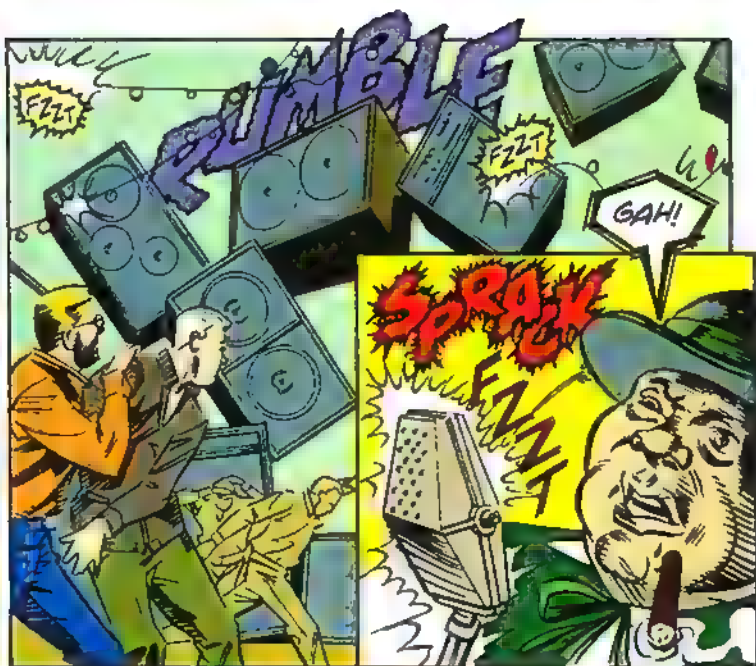
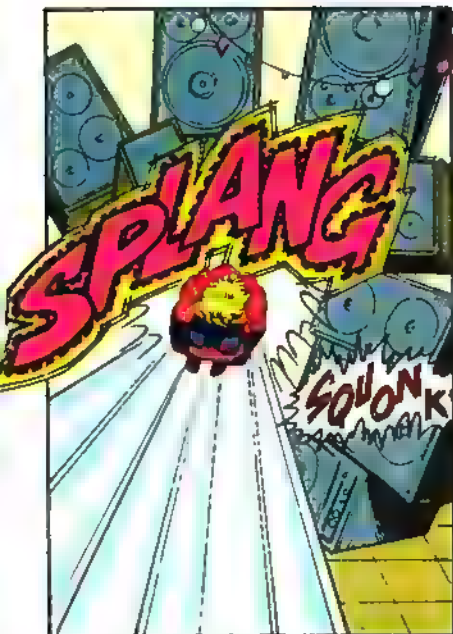
YOW!

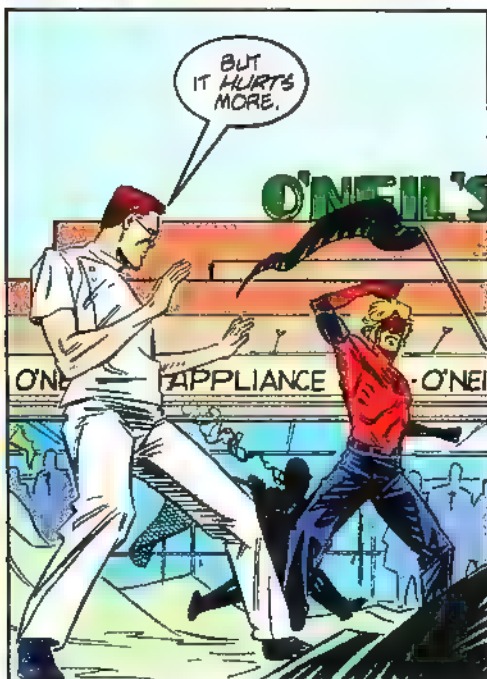
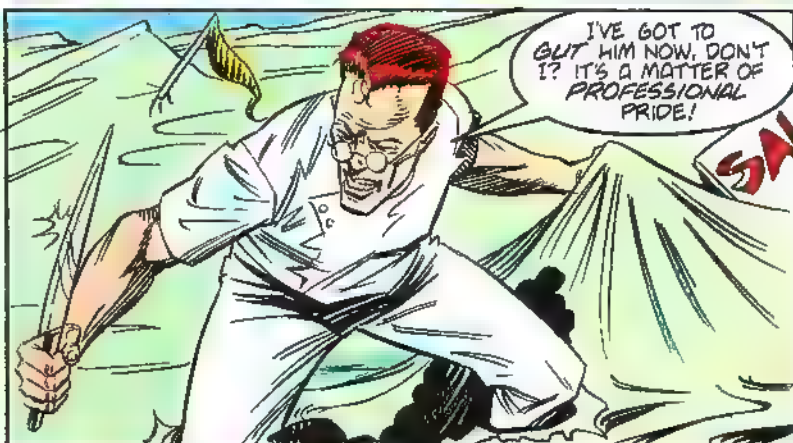
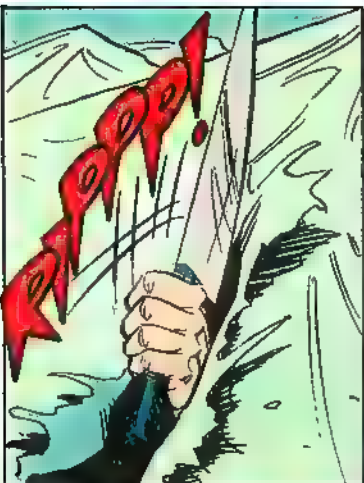
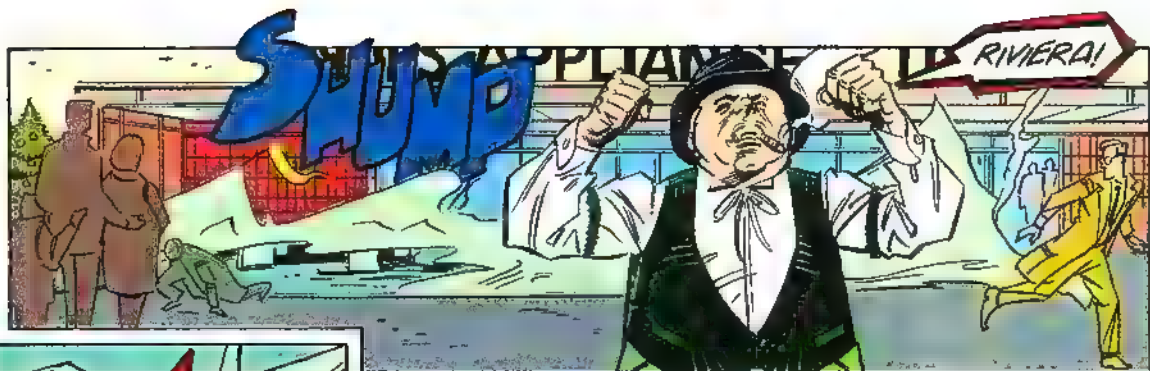


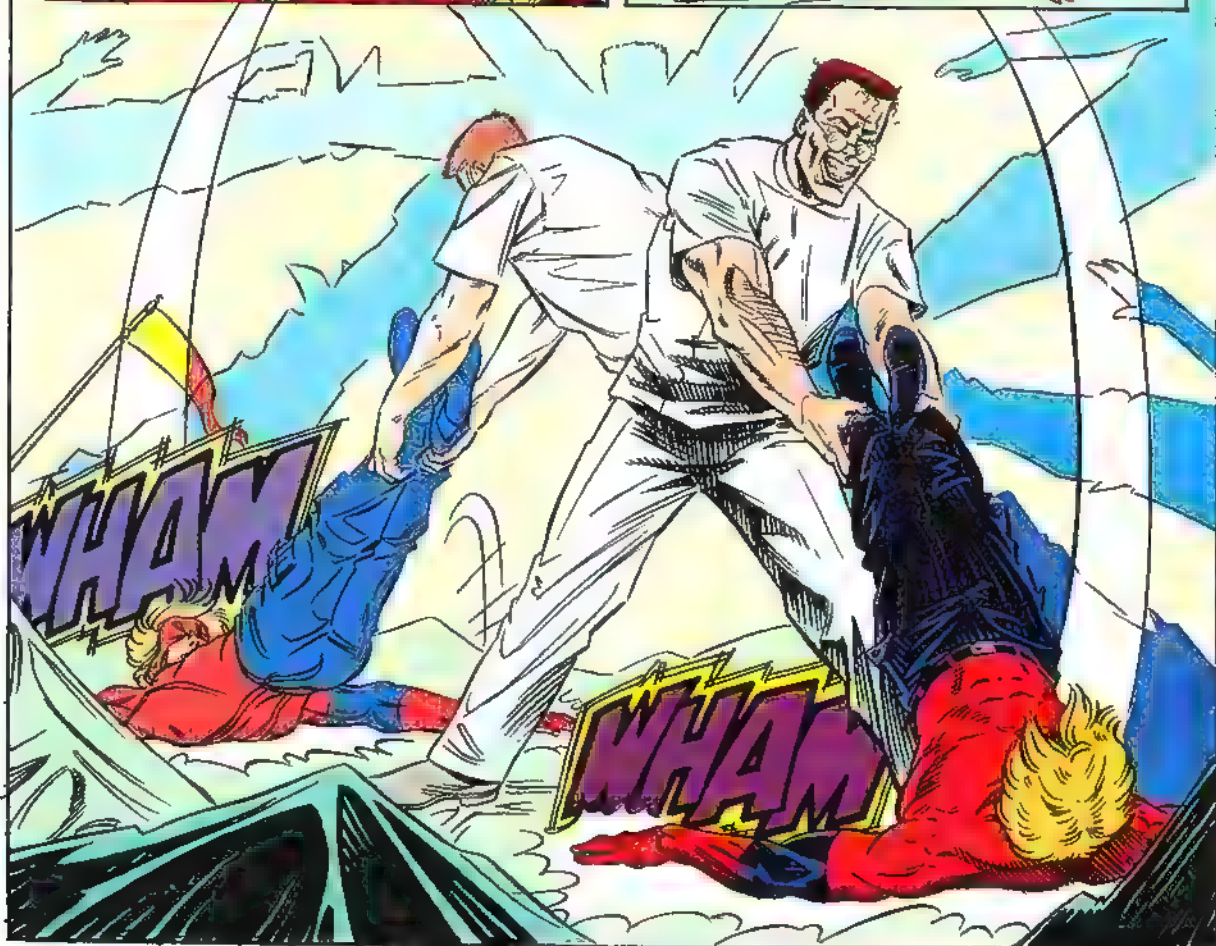
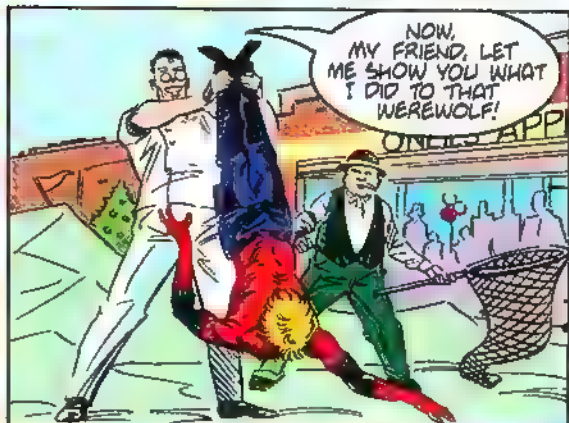
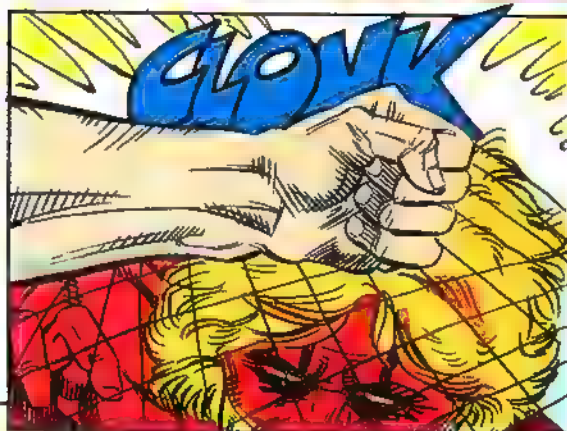
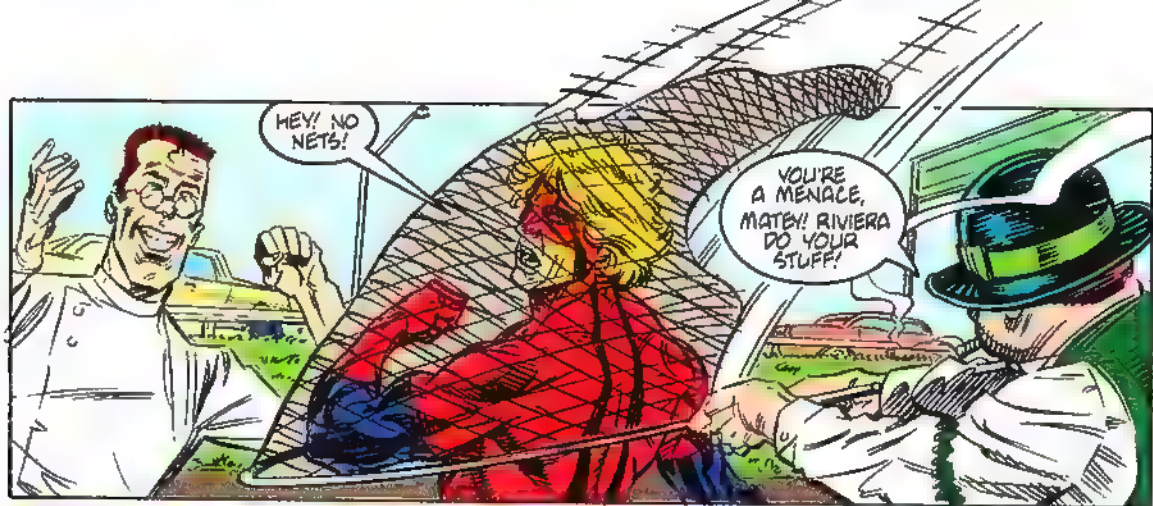
READY
FOR A MEXICAN
PINWHEEL?

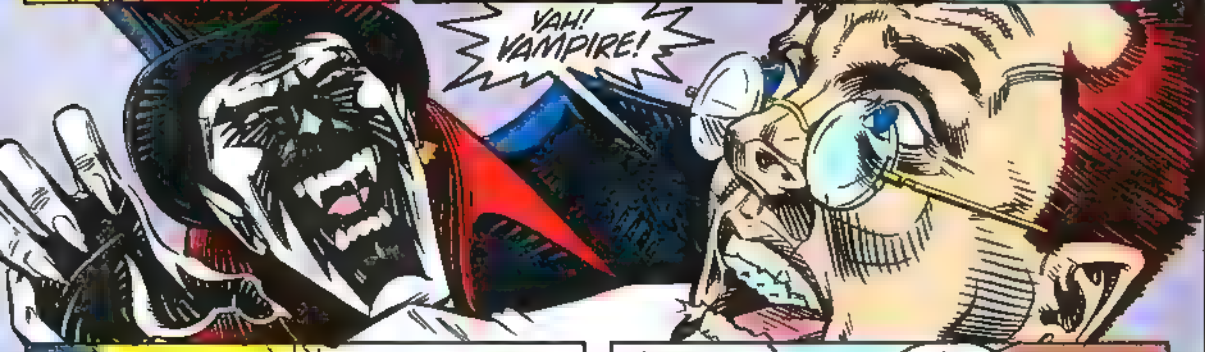


OLE!









...RIOT AT FIGHTIN' TIM O'NEIL'S
APPLIANCE CITY ON THE SOUTH BELTLINE.
LOOTERS MADE OFF WITH SUBSTANTIAL
INVENTORY BEFORE POLICE ARRIVED...



BOTH TV LOONY AND FIGHTIN' TIM
O'NEIL WERE UNAVAILABLE FOR COMMENT.
WE'LL BE RIGHT BACK AFTER THIS
IMPORTANT MESSAGE...



IT'S ME!
LOONY! I'M
SO CRAZY, FOR
A LIMITED TIME
ONLY, I'M GIVING
AWAY A SMALL
SOUTH AMERICAN
COUNTRY
WITH EVERY
COLOR TV!



NOT CRAZY
ENOUGH!

OH NO!

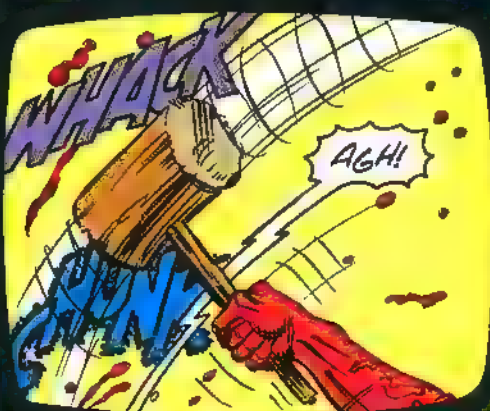
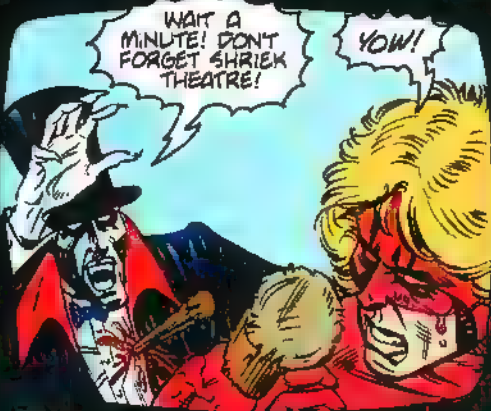


THERE! NOW
I'M REALLY CRAZY!
WITH EVERY COMPUTER,
I'M THROWING IN A FREE
GREAT WHITE SHARK!
THAT'S RIGHT!
HOW CRAZY CAN
YOU GET?



WAIT A
MINUTE! DON'T
FORGET SHRIEK
THEATRE!

YOW!



Stay tuned for: BOB! same time, same station, NEXT MONTH!

PESTILENCIA--WHERE
TRAPPED PESTILS, THE
LOCAL CURRENCY,
CAN BE SPENT ON
DOMESTIC VID
PRODUCTION.

LODZIRRA

TALES from the CLONEZONE



WE'RE ALL GOING TO
DIIIIIIIEEE!!!



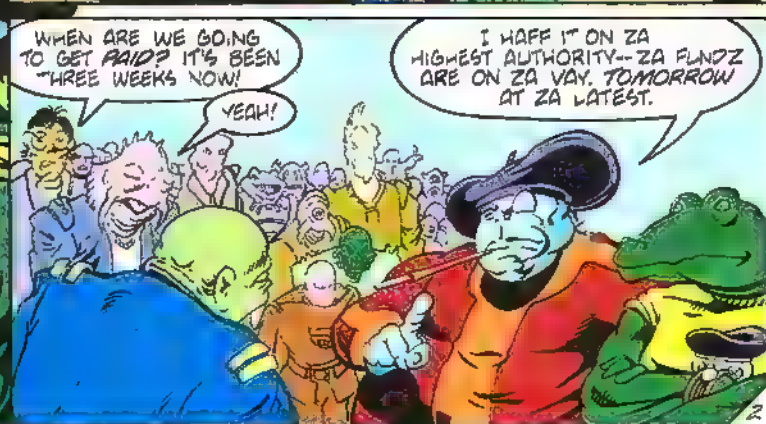
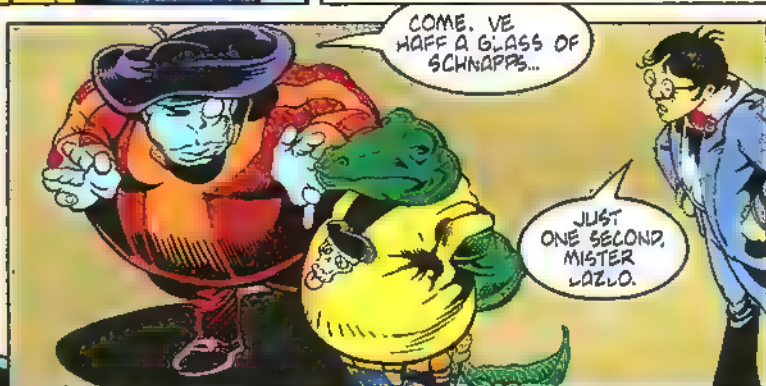
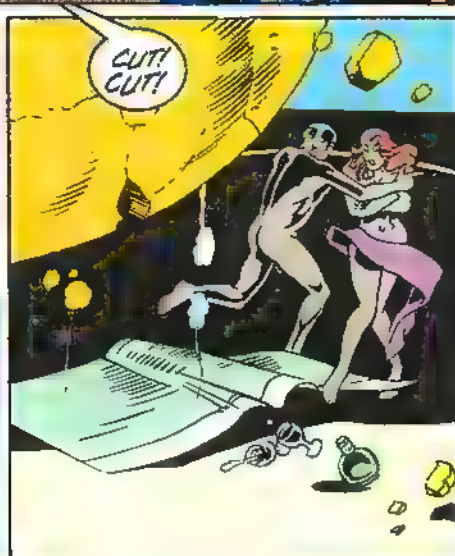
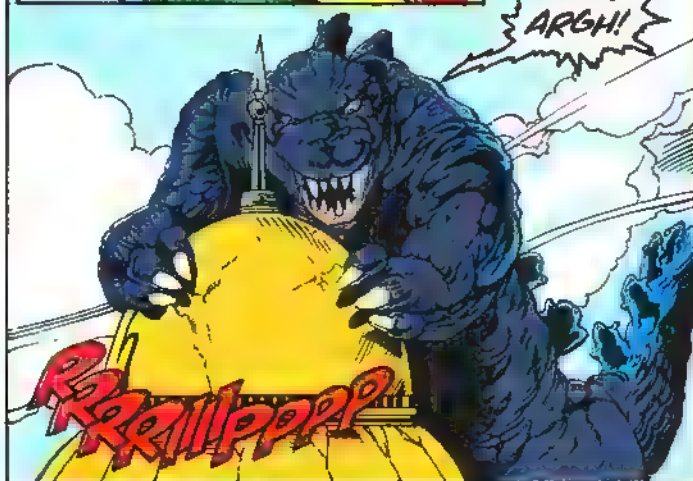
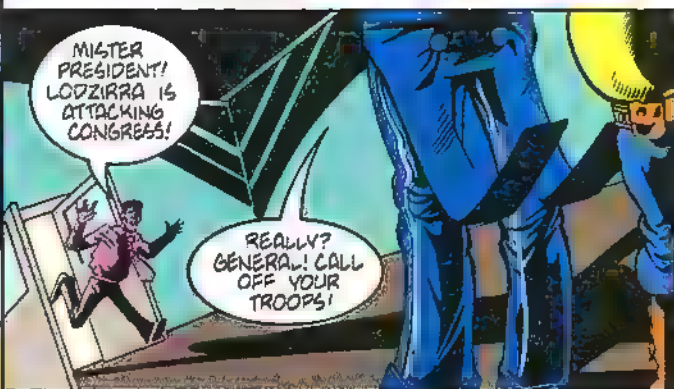
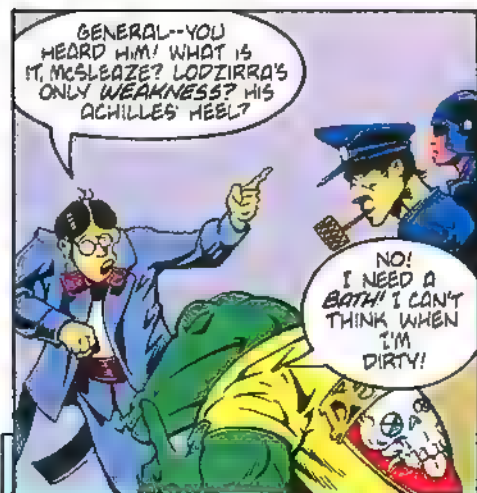
GET A GRIP
ON YOURSELF,
MISTER PRESIDENT!
THE NATION IS
WATCHING!



MCLEAZE--YOU'RE THE
ONLY ONE WHO CAN HELP US NOW!
WHAT DO WE DO?



I'LL
NEED TOWELS--
LOTS OF TOWELS!
AND ABOUT
100 CUBIC KM
BOILING
WATER!





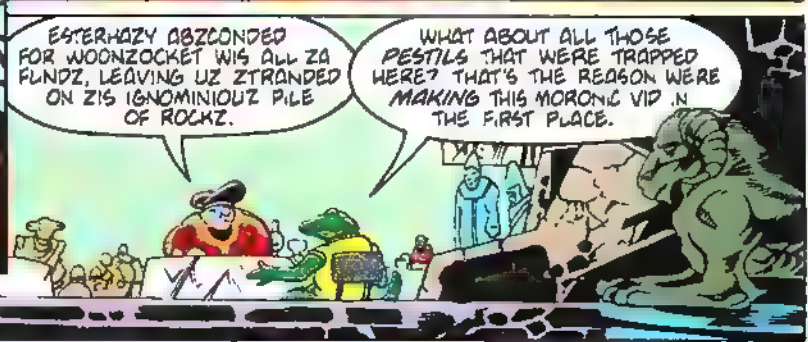
AFTER VE FINISH SHOOTING, I TAKE EFFRYONE OUT FOR DINNER!

ALL RIGHT!



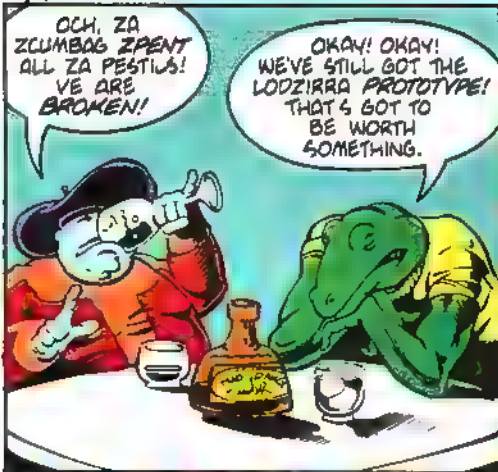
COME, ZONE, MEIN GOTT! WHY DID I SAY ZAT?! I MUST HAAFF BEEN OUT OF MY MIND!

YOU MEAN THE FUNDS AREN'T ON THE WAY?! I THOUGHT THIS ESTERHAZY WAS THE REAL THING!



ESTERHAZY ABZONDED FOR WOONZOCKET WIS ALL ZA FUNDZ, LEAVING UZ ZTRANDED ON ZIS IGNOMINIOUTZ PILE OF ROCKZ.

WHAT ABOUT ALL THOSE PESTILS THAT WERE TRAPPED HERE? THAT'S THE REASON WERE MAKING THIS MORONIC VID IN THE FIRST PLACE.



OCH, ZA ZCUMBAG ZPENT ALL ZA PESTILS! VE ARE BROKEN!

OKAY! OKAY! WE'VE STILL GOT THE LODZIRRA PROTOTYPE! THAT'S GOT TO BE WORTH SOMETHING.

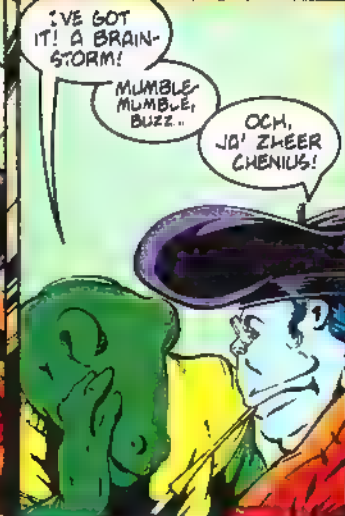


JA! JA! BUT NOT ENUFF TO PAY OFF ZA CAZT UNDT CREW! OCH! THEY'RE NOT A BUNCH TO TAKE ZIS LYING DOWN!



OKAY, LET'S NOT PANIC! HAVE TO THINK-- LET'S BRING TOO TALL IN ON THIS...

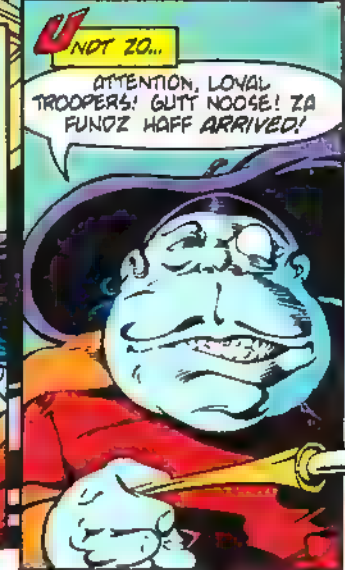
LIZZEN-- PERZONAL LOYALTY NOT WISSTANDING-- WHY NOT JUST PUT ID ON VID?



I'VE GOT IT! A BRAIN-STORM!

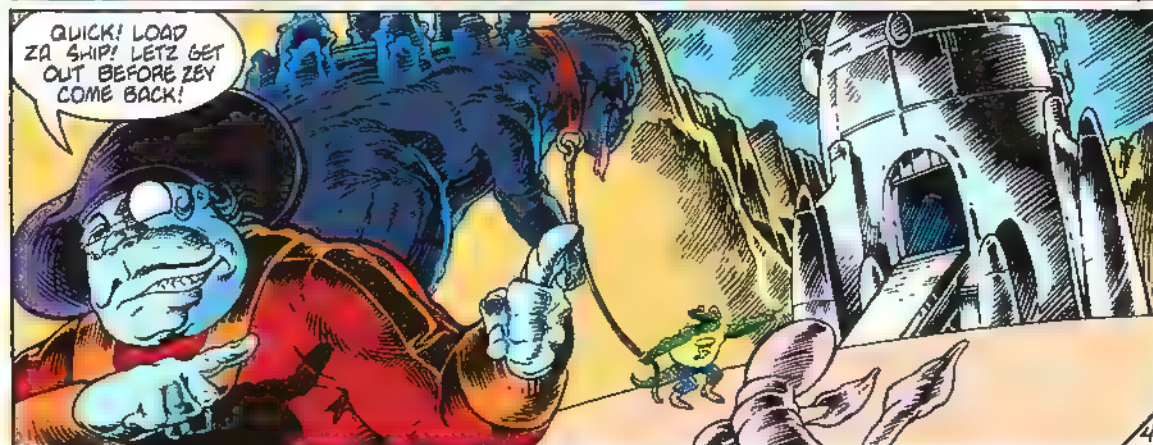
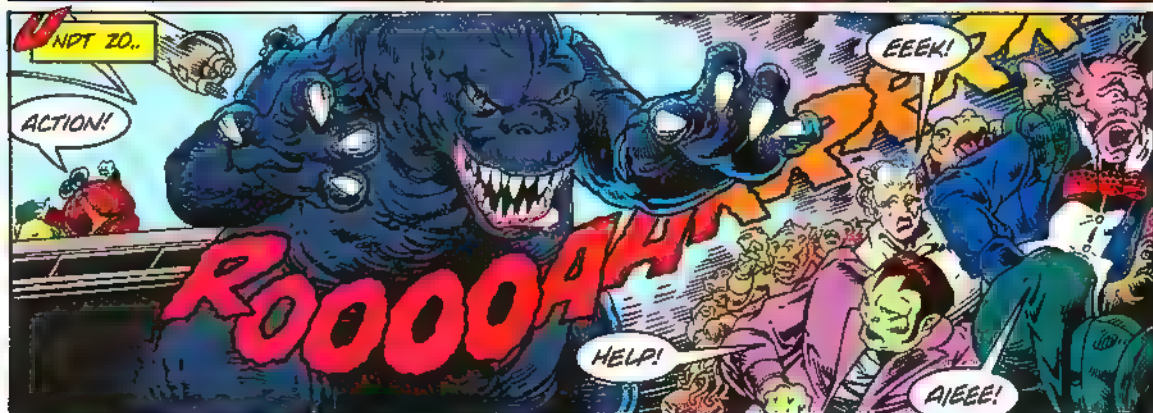
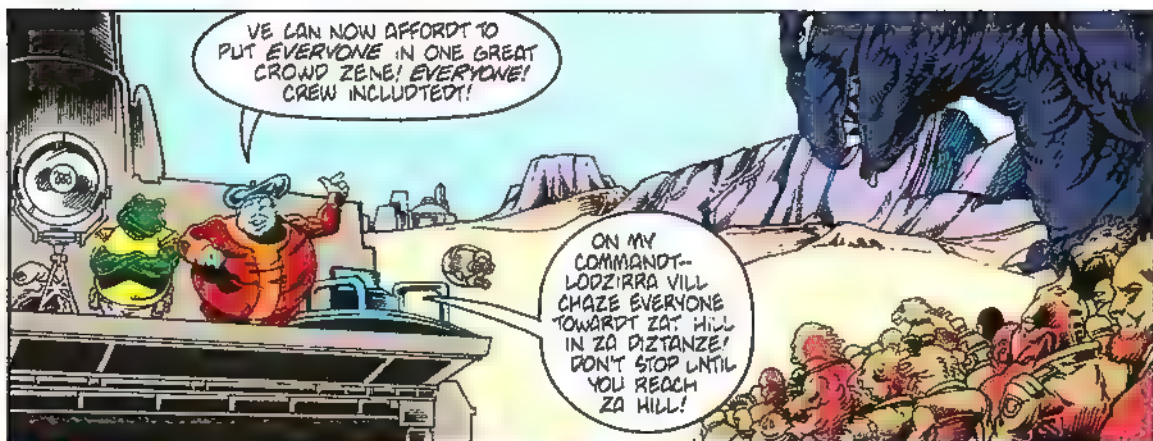
MUMBLE MUMBLE, BUZZ..

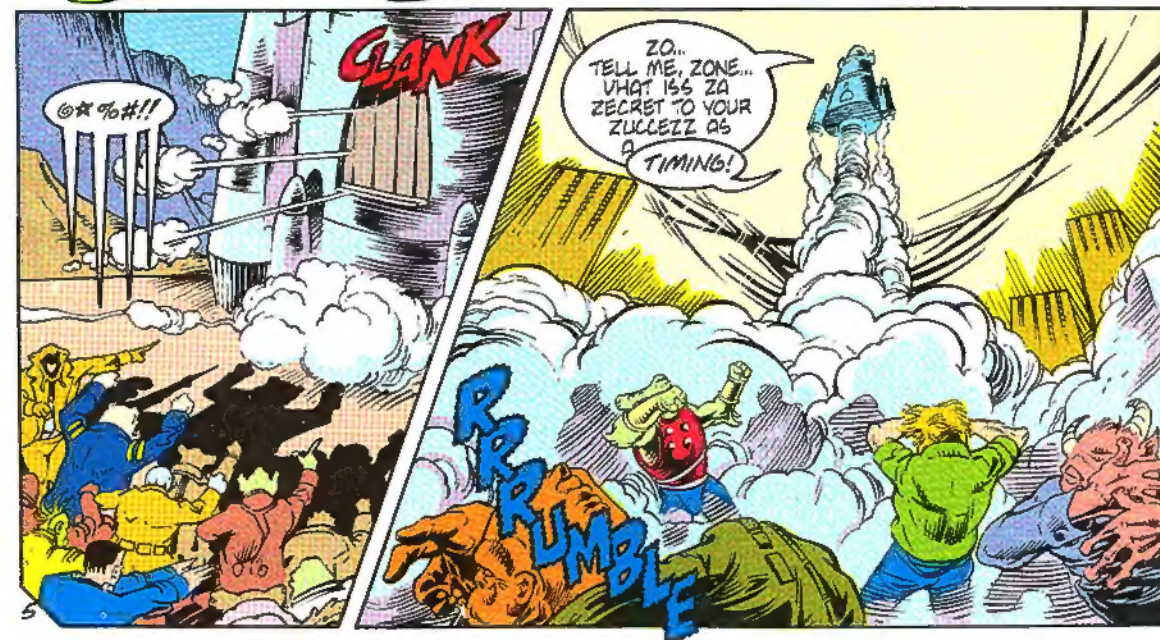
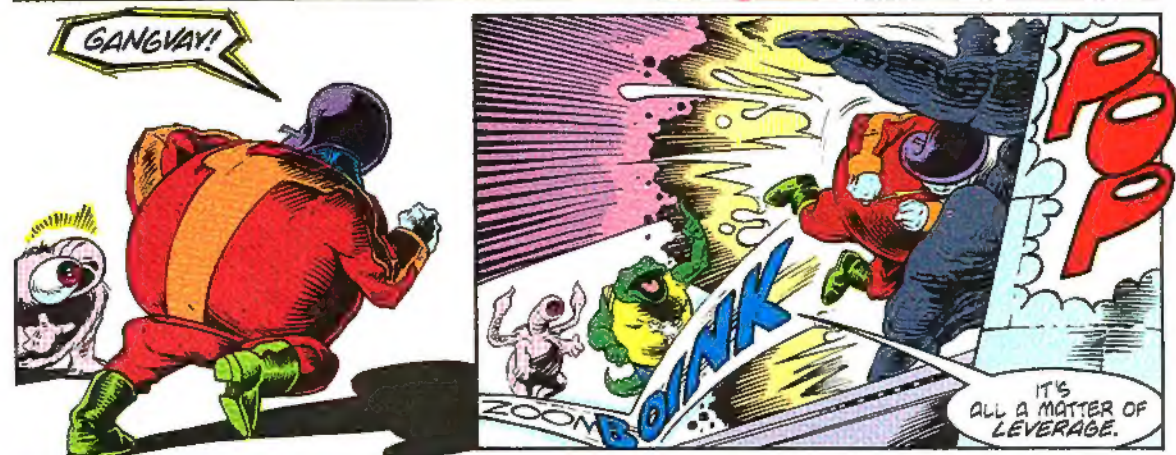
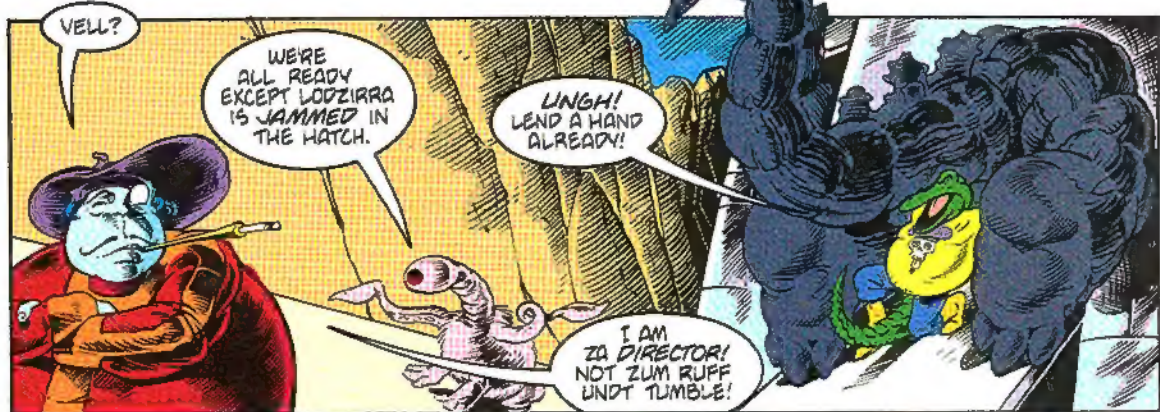
OCH, JA! ZHEER CHENIUS!



UNDT ZO...

ATTENTION, LOVAL TROOPERS! GUTT NOOSE! ZA FUNOZ HAAFF ARRIVED!







Dear LARRY,:

C/O FIRST COMICS
435 N. LASALLE
CHICAGO IL
60610

Yo, Larry!

Badger #17! I loved it! Those circus people sure have trouble, don't they? I hope Lamont is in some future issues. I caught the hat on page eight. Didn't think you'd do it, either. Pretty sly, if you ask me.

Now on to #18. It was really good. Liked the cycle a lot. Can't believe you brought back Cobra and Meldrum.

P.S. How many suits does Badger have?

Jon Croley
[No address]

Badger doesn't wear suits. He leaves all the formal wear to Max Swell.

Dear Larry:

I would like to comment on the latest issue of Badger. I must admit that this book is getting better every issue. There is one thing that I'd like to know: How did you come up with all those awesome uniforms? Also, when are we going to see Badger's motorcycle again?

X-Caliber
[No address]

Badger is not only a martial arts expert - he is also a much sought after clothes designer. No, really! It's true! I know because Mike Baron wrote this plot about Badger getting this gig as a fashion clothes designer; but we decided not to do the story. So you'll just have to take my word for it.

Dear Larry:

I've been collecting Badger since issue #6. So far, I've got

every issue from three up. I'm twelve and very interested in comics. If I'm lucky, I'd like to get on the First staff when I'm older. Maybe you guys could give me some tips on how to get



started in the comics business. I also put a picture I drew in the envelope and was wondering if you guys could pass it around and tell me what you think.

Now, back to Badger. I think you guys have been jumping around too much. There isn't any connecting story.

Manuel Chavez
3132 Del Rosa Ave.
San Brdo, CA 92404

If you're lucky when you get older, you won't be working any place even remotely like First Comics. But if you're really determined - why wait? What makes you think any of us are adults?

Your drawing is exceptionally good for someone your age. It shows real potential. Take lots of art courses, keep practicing, work hard, and someday you could be a poverty-stricken comics professional!

P.S. How do you pronounce "Brdo?"

Dear Larry:

I would just like to know -- WHO THE HELL IS FRED THE WONDER GUPPY?!

Jonathan Romano
16907 Ave. De Santa Ynez
Pacific Palisades, CA 90272

*My lips are sealed.
P.S. Are you Chris' brother?*

Dear Badger-type People:

You say that Zoomtown is gone for good and replaced with Clonezone, but you can't fool me! I read the indicia for #19! And it said, "The Badger, Zoomtown, and all prominent characters featured in this issue are trademarks..." Aha! Don't deny it! You plan to bring Zoomtown back! Yes, anticipating the inevitable downfall of Clonezone, you are teasing us alert readers with these little hints. (You fiends, you!)

The lead story was weird as usual. Using pigs to seek out ultra-valuable mushrooms?! You people have some imagination! What a stupid concept! The next thing you know, you'll

be telling me that people will pay lots of money for fish eggs or something! Say, you wouldn't happen to have a pig that can seek out undiscovered mint copies of rare and extremely valuable golden age comics, eh? Now that would be useful!

"Goofy Maple"
Box 1272, Station B
Weston, Ontario
M9L 2R9 Canada

We can't fool you, T.M.! It won't be any surprise to you at all when we premiere: The Clonezone/Zoomtown Wars! An exciting new mega-series -- 250 issues pitting MacSleaze against the Gear! And when it's all over, you'll never be the same again! You'll be 20 years older!

Deary Larry:

Yow! Am I happy? At last my favorite sleazeball gator is where he belongs -- snug in compartment four of the Luna-ville trolley with the Badge! Thanks, guys -- I would buy ANY comic that had either of these madcaps in it, and to put the two of them together in the same mag would make it a stone bargain at twice the price.

Tom Tobacco
Georgetown, KY

Dear Larry:

Lately, the Badger just hasn't been himself. For about the last ten issues you've given in to obnoxious writers. You're a wimp, Larry. My friends and I have been seriously disappointed.

Every time a candy ass, Presbyterian, born-again fundamentalist writes to you about someone's lip getting bloodied or a jaywalker getting his elbow dislocated because he deserves it, you seem to give in to their petty demands. If they want to read a bunch of silly, non-violent cartoon characters, tell them to read Star Comics or play with Born-Again Bunny.

Another thing that really gets my goat is Ham. Lately, he has been a 250 pound geek. He has Power; let him use it! He isn't just some laid back lard-ass.

I used to find deep pleasure in the aloof insanity of Norbert Sykes. He was dementedly cool. Not a dopey prankster. Why don't you just draw him with a wig, make-up, and large shoes? You're straining for a laugh. The most appealing humor was in the earlier issues because he was serious, not silly. He was insane, true, but he had conviction.

Theodore Nugent
[No address]

Gee, Beav -- um, I mean Theodore, if you really dislike born-again fundamentalists, you're going to absolutely hate next month's story!

P.S. Are you any relation to "Terrible" Ted Nugent?



NEXT MONTH: Badger meets "Bob." Doesn't sound very exciting to you? Oh yeah? What if I told you he's got a neat hat and a spiffy pipe? His pants are neatly pressed? Still doesn't do anything for you, huh? Okay, what if I told you he's a demon sent by IBOB to eliminate Badger? And what if I told you it's by Mike Baron and guest artist Chuck Beckum? Bet you can hardly wait now!

-- Rick Oliver

